

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE

DECISION RECORD
Crooked Creek Timber Sale
Environmental Assessment No. OR090-EA-01-04

Background:

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Crooked Creek Analysis Area were prepared by the McKenzie Resource Area, Eugene District Office. Timber harvest, road construction, road improvement and road decommissioning would occur on Matrix and Riparian Reserve lands as identified in the Northwest Forest Plan. The Crooked Creek Analysis area is located in T. 15 S., R. 2 W., Sections 22 and 23 Will. Mer.

Management objectives are to:

- ! Fulfill the BLM's mission and policy of providing wood products and jobs in the General Forest Management Area (MATRIX) for FY 2001.
- ! Help the Eugene District meet its commercial thinning harvest commitment for FY 2001.
- ! Comply with the Standards and Guidelines in the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Northwest Forest Plan.
- ! Manage Matrix lands by commercial thinning to capture mortality, reduce stocking density and redistribute growth and yield to the remaining stand.
- ! Manage a portion of the Riparian Reserves by density management thinning to reduce stocking density and redistribute growth to the remaining stand.
- ! Construct permanent and temporary roads for timber harvesting, improve roads by replacing or eliminating culverts and decommissioning roads not needed for the foreseeable future.

Consultation:

The proposed sale was reviewed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) through the formal consultation process. The FWS Biological Opinion is that this action is a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" the Northern Spotted Owl.

Informal conferencing by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) was completed on April 21, 1999. The result of the conferencing was a "Not Likely to Adversely Affect" on Spring Chinook. Winter steelhead (also a listed species) are not found in the vicinity of the project area.

Public Comments:

This EA and FONSI were advertised on March 28, 2001, as available for a 30 -day public review period in the Eugene Register-Guard. Copies of the EA and FONSI were mailed to interested individuals.

A public comment letter was received concerning Survey and Manage Species surveys for Red Tree Voles. The surveys were completed to Red Tree Vole protocol resulting in the discovery of one inactive Red Tree Vole nest. A 100 meter search around the inactive nest was performed and resulted in no additional nest structures discovered. Forested stands of this age (approximately 40 years old) hold little habitat for Red Tree Voles without additional forest structures such as remnant large diameter trees. The proposed project area does not contain large remnant trees, which in this case may be limiting the potential for Red Tree Vole occurrence.

Finding of No Significant Impact:

On the basis of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment (OR090-EA-01-04), and all other information available to me, it is my determination that implementation of the Proposed Action or Alternative will not have significant environmental impacts not already addressed in the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994) and the Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (June 1995) as amended by the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines, January 2001. Environmental Assessment OR 090-EA-01-04 is in conformance with the above documents and does not, in and of itself, constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement (EIS) or supplement to the existing EIS is unnecessary and will not be prepared.

Additions:

The EA did not mention three resources that are unaffected by the proposal. The EA should have included the following:

Unaffected Resources: The following are either not present or would not be affected by any of the alternatives: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wild and Scenic Rivers or Wilderness.

Decision:

The decision is to implement Alternative I the Proposed Action, as analyzed in EA OR090-EA-01-04. This Alternative consists of ten commercial thinning areas (93 acres of Matrix and 52 acres of Riparian Reserve) and the construction of 0.3 mile of new permanent road, 0.3 mile of temporary road. Approximately 1.2 miles of new constructed temporary road and existing road would be decommissioned.

An estimated 1.105 MMBF or 2,018 CCF (hundred cubic feet) of timber will be harvested. The mitigation measures, design features and management requirements, logging methods, road decommissioning, green tree and snag retention goals as described in the EA, are hereby adopted.

Rationale:

Alternative I is selected because it meets project objectives described in the background section of this document, and is consistent with the Standards and Guidelines in the Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994). Alternative I (Proposed Action) would not prevent nor retard attainment of any of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives.

Alternative II (No Action Alternative) was not selected because it does not meet the project objectives described in the background section of this document, nor does it meet the intent of the SEIS/ROD or

Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan.

Alternative III (No Riparian Thinning Alternative) was not selected because it does not enhance riparian stand structure as well as Alternative I, and maintains a portion of road likely not needed for future management actions.

Administrative Remedies:

This Decision Record can not be protested at this time. The purpose of this Decision Record is to let the public know that a decision has been made to select Alternative 1 and that the field work needed to prepare the area for sale will be implemented according to the selected Alternative. In accordance with 43 CFR 5003, a notice of sale published in the newspaper, rather than this Decision Record, will constitute the decision document for the purpose of protests. The decision to conduct a sale will be subject to protest for 15 days following first publication of the notice of sale. The tentative date for publishing the notice of sale is June 2001, although this date is subject to change without notice.

Approved by: Emily Rice
Field Manager, McKenzie Resource Area

Date: 5/11/01